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Groups of countries in special situations: follow-up to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

Report of the Second Committee*

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I. Introduction

1. The Second Committee held a substantive debate on agenda item 22 (see A/71/466, para. 2). Action on sub-item (a) was taken at the 23rd and 28th meetings, on 2 November and 8 December 2016. An account of the Committee's consideration of the sub-item is contained in the relevant summary records.[1]

II. Consideration of draft resolutions A/C.2/71/L.26 and A/C.2/71/L.52

2. At the 23rd meeting, on 2 November, the representative of Thailand, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Follow-up to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries" (A/C.2/71/L.26).

3. At its 28th meeting, on 8 December, the Committee had before it a draft resolution entitled "Follow-up to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries" (A/C.2/71/L.52), submitted by the Vice-Chair of the Committee, Arthur Andambi (Kenya), on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/71/L.26.

* The report of the Committee on this item is being issued in three parts, under the symbols A/71/466, A/71/466/Add.1 and A/71/466/Add.2.

[1] A/C.2/71/SR.23 and A/C.2/71/SR.28.

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4. At the same meeting, the Committee was informed that draft resolution A/C.2/71/L.52 had no programme budget implications.

5. Also at its 28th meeting, following a statement by the facilitator of the draft resolution (Turkey), the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/71/L.52 (see para. 8).

6. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/71/L.52, draft resolution A/C.2/71/L.26 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

7. At its 28th meeting, on the proposal of the Chair, Dian Triansyah Djani (Indonesia), the Committee decided to take note of the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the draft Charter of the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries (A/71/363).

III. Recommendation of the Second Committee

8. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Follow-up to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

The General Assembly,

Recalling the Istanbul Declaration[1] and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020,[2] adopted at the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in Istanbul, Turkey, from 9 to 13 May 2011, and endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 65/280 of 17 June 2011, in which the Assembly called upon all the relevant stakeholders to commit to implementing the Istanbul Programme of Action,

Recalling also the Political Declaration adopted by the Comprehensive High-level Midterm Review of the Implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020, held in Antalya, Turkey, from 27 to 29 May 2016, and endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 70/294 of 25 July 2016, in which the Assembly called upon all the relevant stakeholders to commit to implementing the Declaration,

Reaffirming the overarching goal of the Istanbul Programme of Action of overcoming the structural challenges faced by the least developed countries to eradicate poverty, achieve the internationally agreed development goals and enable graduation from the least developed country category,

Reaffirming also its resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", in which it adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets, its commitment to working tirelessly for the full implementation of the Agenda by 2030, its recognition that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, its commitment to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions — economic, social and environmental — in a balanced and integrated manner, and to building upon the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals and seeking to address their unfinished business,

Reaffirming further its resolution 69/313 of 27 July 2015 on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, supports and complements it, helps to contextualize its means of implementation targets with concrete policies and actions, and reaffirms the strong political commitment to address the challenge of financing and creating an enabling

[1] *Report of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, Istanbul, Turkey, 9-13 May 2011* (A/CONF.219/7), chap. I.

[2] Ibid., chap. II.

environment at all levels for sustainable development in the spirit of global partnership and solidarity,

Welcoming the Paris Agreement[3] and its early entry into force, encouraging all its parties to fully implement the Agreement, and parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change[4] that have not yet done so to deposit their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, where appropriate, as soon as possible,

Recalling the Sendai Declaration and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030[5] adopted at the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction,

Recalling also its resolution 70/216 of 22 December 2015 on the follow-up to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries,

Recalling further Economic and Social Council resolution 2016/15 of 26 July 2016 on the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020,

Recalling its resolution 67/221 of 21 December 2012 on the smooth transition for countries graduating from the list of least developed countries,

Noting the convening of the Ministerial Conference on New Partnerships for Productive Capacity-Building in the Least Developed Countries, held in Cotonou, Benin, from 28 to 31 July 2014, the Ministerial Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Least Developed Countries on Graduation and the Post-2015 Development Agenda, held in Kathmandu from 16 to 18 December 2014, and the Ministerial Meeting of the African Least Developed Countries on Structural Transformation, Graduation and the Post-2015 Development Agenda, held in Milan, Italy, from 8 to 10 June 2015,

Noting also the first World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul, Turkey, on 23 and 24 May 2016,

Welcoming the New Urban Agenda, adopted at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), held in Quito from 17 to 20 October 2016,

Welcoming also the fourteenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, in Nairobi from 17 to 22 July 2016, and its outcome,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020[6] and the report of the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, entitled "State of the Least Developed Countries, 2016";

2. *Calls upon* the least developed countries, their development partners, the United Nations system and all other actors to further strengthen the global partnership for development for the least developed countries in all priority areas of

[3] See FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, decision 1/CP.21, annex.
[4] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.
[5] Resolution 69/283, annexes I and II.
[6] A/71/66-E/2016/11.

the Istanbul Programme of Action[1] in order to ensure the timely, effective and full implementation of the Programme of Action during the remainder of the decade, in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,[7] the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development,[8] which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda, supports and complements it and helps to contextualize its means of implementation targets with concrete policies and actions, the Paris Agreement, adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,[9] and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030;[10]

3. *Recalls* the decision contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that effective linkages will be made with the follow-up and review arrangements of all relevant United Nations conferences and processes, including on the least developed countries, underlines the importance of strong synergy in the implementation of the recently adopted agendas and the Istanbul Programme of Action at the national and subnational levels, and encourages coordination and coherence in the follow-up of their implementation;

4. *Reaffirms* the lessons learned in the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action and the recommendations contained in the Political Declaration of the Comprehensive High-level Midterm Review of the Implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020;[3]

5. *Recalls* the objectives of the Istanbul Programme of Action of enhancing good governance at all levels by strengthening democratic processes, institutions and the rule of law, increasing efficiency, coherence, transparency and participation, protecting and promoting human rights, reducing corruption and strengthening the capacity of Governments of least developed countries to play an effective role in their economic and social development;

6. *Recognizes* that furthering participation, empowering civil society, youth and women and strengthening collective action will contribute to the eradication of poverty and the achievement of sustainable development;

7. *Invites* the private sector, civil society and foundations to contribute to the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action in their respective areas of competence, in line with the national priorities of the least developed countries;

8. *Notes with appreciation* that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda incorporate a number of key development challenges and priorities for the least developed countries;

9. *Reaffirms* that the least developed countries, as the most vulnerable group of countries, need enhanced global support to overcome the structural challenges they face in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and in this regard calls upon the international community to prioritize and strengthen support from all sources to facilitate the coordinated implementation

[7] Resolution 70/1.
[8] Resolution 69/313.
[9] Resolution 69/283, annex II.
[10] Resolution 70/294, annex.

and coherent follow-up to and monitoring of the Istanbul Programme of Action, the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda in the least developed countries;

10. *Recognizes* that significant additional domestic public resources, including at the subnational level, supplemented by international assistance as appropriate, will be critical to realizing sustainable development and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, and that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda acknowledge the centrality of domestic resource mobilization underscored by the principle of national ownership;

11. *Also recognizes* that, while the least developed countries have made considerable efforts to mobilize domestic resources and attract private investment, further progress is needed;

12. *Further recognizes* that private business activity, investment and innovation are major drivers of productivity, inclusive economic growth and job creation, and that private international capital flows, in particular foreign direct investment, along with a stable international financial system, are vital complements to national development efforts;

13. *Reiterates* that an important use of international public finance, including official development assistance (ODA), is to catalyse additional resource mobilization from other sources, public and private;

14. *Also reiterates* that the fulfilment of all ODA commitments remains crucial and that ODA providers reaffirm their respective commitments, including the commitment by many developed countries to achieve the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance (ODA/GNI) and 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of ODA/GNI to the least developed countries;

15. *Encouraged* by those few countries that have met or surpassed their commitment to 0.7 per cent of ODA/GNI and the target of 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of ODA/GNI to the least developed countries, urges all others to step up efforts to increase their ODA and to make additional concrete efforts towards the ODA targets, and encourages ODA providers to consider setting a target to provide at least 0.20 per cent of ODA/GNI to the least developed countries;

16. *Also encouraged* by those who are allocating at least 50 per cent of their ODA to the least developed countries;

17. *Welcomes* continued efforts to improve the quality, impact and effectiveness of development cooperation and other international efforts in public finance, including adherence to agreed development cooperation effectiveness principles;

18. *Calls upon* the developing countries, guided by the spirit of solidarity and consistent with their capabilities, to provide support for the effective implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action in mutually agreed areas of cooperation within the framework of South-South cooperation, which is a complement to but not a substitute for North-South cooperation;

19. *Urges* the least developed countries and their development partners to make use of existing initiatives and programmes, such as the relevant ministerial decisions of the World Trade Organization on duty-free and quota-free market access for the least developed countries and on preferential rules of origin for those

countries, as well as aid for trade, reiterates its commitment to increase aid-for-trade support, in particular for the least developed countries, and strives to allocate an increasing proportion of aid for trade to the least developed countries, provided according to development cooperation effectiveness principles, welcomes additional cooperation among developing countries to this end, encourages the least developed countries to mainstream trade in their national development plans, with this in mind welcomes the extension of the Enhanced Integrated Framework for Trade-related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries into phase two and, as the Enhanced Integrated Framework implements the reforms agreed as necessary for its continuation, urges members to contribute to the timely replenishment of the Enhanced Integrated Framework Trust Fund, for the effective implementation, without any disruption, of the Framework between 2016 and 2023;

20. *Reiterates* that more effective representation of the least developed countries in decision-making at the global level could improve the international environment for the development of the least developed countries, and also reiterates that the international economic system and architecture should be inclusive and responsive to the special development needs of the least developed countries, ensuring their effective participation, voice and representation at all levels;

21. *Recognizes* the significant potential of multilateral development banks and other international development banks in financing sustainable development and providing know-how to the least developed countries;

22. *Recalls* the decision contained in the Istanbul Programme of Action and reaffirmed in General Assembly resolution 67/220 of 21 December 2012 to adopt, expand and implement investment promotion regimes for the least developed countries, and welcomes the decision contained in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda to adopt and implement investment promotion regimes for the least developed countries and the offer to provide financial and technical support for project preparation and contract negotiation, advisory support in investment-related dispute resolution, access to information on investment facilities and risk insurance and guarantees such as through the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency;

23. *Reiterates* its invitation to the Secretary-General, in his capacity as the Chair of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, to include the issue of investment promotion regimes for the least developed countries in the agenda of the Board, with a view to enhancing the overall effectiveness of United Nations system support that can contribute to enhancing the flow of foreign direct investment to the least developed countries and the ability of those countries to attract such investment;

24. *Also reiterates* its invitation to the Economic and Social Council, at its next annual forum on financing for development follow-up, to discuss adopting and implementing investment promotion regimes for the least developed countries, pursuant to the relevant resolutions on the matter, including General Assembly resolution 69/313 on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the mandate of the annual forum on financing for development follow-up set out therein, invites the President of the Council to include the outcome of this discussion in his summary of the forum on financing for development follow-up, and recalls that the intergovernmentally agreed conclusions and recommendations of the forum will

inform the overall follow-up and review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the high-level political forum on sustainable development;

25. *Expresses its deep concern* that, owing to significant capacity constraints, the least developed countries are disproportionately affected by the adverse impacts of climate change, including persistent drought and extreme weather events, sea-level rise, coastal erosion, salinity intrusion, glacier lake outburst floods, ocean acidification and the rise in frequency, as well as the impact, of natural and man-made disasters, which further threaten food security and efforts to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development, and expresses its concern that women and girls are often disproportionately affected by the impacts of climate change and other environmental issues;

26. *Underlines* the need to reduce the vulnerability of the least developed countries to economic, natural and environmental shocks and disasters, as well as climate change, and to enhance their ability to meet these and other challenges by strengthening their resilience, and in this regard stresses that it is important that all countries and other actors work together to further develop and implement concrete measures on an urgent basis at the national and international levels so as to build the resilience of the least developed countries to withstand economic shocks and mitigate their adverse effects, to withstand and overcome the adverse effects of climate change, to enhance sustainable growth and protect biodiversity and to withstand natural hazards in order to reduce the risk of disasters, as agreed upon in the Istanbul Programme of Action;

27. *Recalls* the decision contained in the Political Declaration of the Midterm Review to undertake an in-depth analysis on crisis mitigation and resilience-building for the least developed countries, at the national and international levels, with a view to building and further strengthening crisis mitigation and resilience in the least developed countries, and the request to the General Assembly to determine the parameters of this analysis at its seventy-first session, and decides that the analysis, to be submitted to the Assembly at its seventy-second session, should focus, inter alia, on the following issues:

(a) Stocktaking of various shocks, including natural disasters, economic crises and health epidemics and their impacts on the sustainable development of the least developed countries;

(b) Reviewing the current national, regional and international landscapes to better equip the least developed countries against shocks and their effectiveness and identifying gaps;

(c) Cataloguing and evaluating various risk-management mechanisms at the subnational, national, regional and global levels available to the least developed countries that combine ex ante preparations for risk with the ex post facto ability to cope with such risk and making recommendations for further actions to strengthen the resilience of the least developed countries;

(d) Elaborating on how the international community, including developed and developing countries, the United Nations system and other international and regional organizations, are supporting and can deepen support for resilience-building for the least developed countries;

(e) Examining how the private sector, civil society, academia and other stakeholders, as well as local knowledge and community involvement, can contribute to resilience-building for the least developed countries through preparedness measures, the creation of employment, awareness-raising, the provision of insurance and other measures;

28. *Congratulates* those countries that have graduated from least developed country status, notes with appreciation that several least developed countries have expressed their intention to reach the status of graduation by 2020, invites them to start the preparations for their graduation and transition strategy, and requests all relevant organizations of the United Nations system, led by the Office of the High Representative, to extend necessary support in this regard, in a coordinated manner;

29. *Reiterates its recommendation* that the consultative mechanism specified in its resolution 59/209 of 20 December 2004 be established by the graduating country, in cooperation with its bilateral and multilateral development and trading partners, to facilitate the preparation of the transition strategy and the identification of the associated actions and the negotiation of their duration and phasing-out for a period appropriate to the development situation of the country, and that it be integrated into other relevant consultative processes and initiatives between the graduating country and its development partners;

30. *Invites* development partners to make available timely information about country-specific support measures and related smooth transition measures for the least developed countries in the areas of financial support, technical assistance and trade-related measures, including their time frames, characteristics and modalities;

31. *Reaffirms* its commitment to fully operationalize the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries by 2017, and welcomes the establishment of its multi-stakeholder governing council and trust fund;

32. *Encourages* the least developed countries, in accordance with their national plans and priorities and with the full support of their development partners, to develop their capacities to track financial transactions, administer taxation, regulate customs and redouble efforts to substantially reduce illicit financial flows by 2030, with a view to eventually eliminating them, including by combating tax evasion and corruption through strengthened national regulation, and also encourages the United Nations and other relevant international bodies to help support these efforts, in accordance with their respective mandates;

33. *Recognizes* that the activities relating to the least developed countries carried out within the Secretariat need to be further coordinated and consolidated in order to ensure effective monitoring and follow-up of the Istanbul Programme of Action, led by the Office of the High Representative, and to provide well-coordinated support to realizing the goal of enabling half of the least developed countries to meet the criteria for graduation by 2020;

34. *Takes note* of the work of the Inter-Agency Consultative Group for the least developed countries, led by the Office of the High Representative, also takes note of the finalization by the Office of the High Representative of the toolkit for mainstreaming the Istanbul Programme of Action into the work programmes of the organizations of the United Nations system, which was considered by the High-Level Committee on Programmes and taken note of by the United Nations System

Chief Executives Board for Coordination,[11] notes the steps taken by the Chief Executives Board and the High-level Committee in supporting coordination and follow-up of the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action on a system-wide basis, and reiterates its invitation to the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of the Chief Executives Board, to include implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action in the agenda of the Board;

35. *Underlines* the need to give particular attention to the issues and concerns of the least developed countries in all major United Nations conferences and processes;

36. *Reiterates* its request to the Secretary-General to include, as appropriate, the issues of concern to the least developed countries in all relevant reports in the economic, social, environmental and related fields, in order to support the implementation of the goals set out in the Istanbul Programme of Action;

37. *Strongly encourages* Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, major groups and other donors to contribute in a timely manner to the Trust Fund in Support of Activities Undertaken by the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States to support the implementation, follow-up and monitoring of the Istanbul Programme of Action and the participation of the representatives from the least developed countries in the annual review meeting on the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action by the Economic and Social Council as well as in other relevant forums, and in this regard expresses its appreciation to those countries that have made voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund;

38. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session a report on the implementation of the present resolution and the Istanbul Programme of Action and decides to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-second session, under the item entitled "Groups of countries in special situations", the sub-item entitled "Follow-up to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries", unless otherwise agreed.

[11] See http://unohrlls.org/mainstreamingtheipoa/.